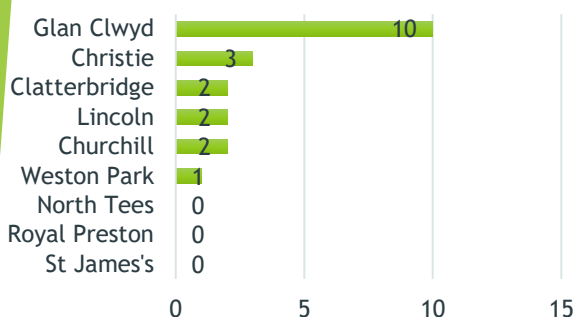


The Chief Investigators Professor Simon Gollins and Dr Ane Appelt would like to express our deepest thanks for your participation in the APHRODITE trial. This will help to improve the treatment of patients like yourself with early stage rectal cancer. We hope that we will be able to determine whether higher dose chemo-radiotherapy can serve as a viable alternative treatment for patients who cannot, or would prefer not, to have invasive surgery for their rectal cancer. This newsletter provides an update on the progress and current status of the trial.

## Patients Recruited



## Trial Status

APHRODITE is currently recruiting patients in 9 hospitals (out of 13 planned). 20 patients have been recruited so far. Our current focus is on opening the last 4 sites so that patients from all sites can have the opportunity to take part in the study. The intended total number of participants in APHRODITE is 104. The trial will continue for 2 years following the last patient being recruited, although we may be able to provide the first results before that point.

## COVID-19 Pandemic

The pandemic has impacted us all, and we had to pause recruitment to the trial for 7 months in 2020. Since then, the trial team – who are primarily working from home – have worked hard to get the trial back up to speed, but we are still behind on recruitment compared to where we would like to be. We have now implemented a major amendment to the eligibility criteria to the trial, which we hope will increase the number of patients who can be offered treatment. Finally, we are very grateful to our NHS colleagues who have supported the trial all the way through, despite the challenging conditions.

## Survey Study

We would also like to express thanks to those who agreed to take part in the survey study “How do patients make decisions about rectal cancer treatment?” This is a separate study, but with a large overlap in patient populations, and many participants have been recruited to both APHRODITE and the survey at the same time. The results from this study will be useful for the planning of future trials.

For more details on the trial please refer to your Patient Information Sheet or ask your doctor or research nurse. You can also visit the trial website <https://ctru.leeds.ac.uk/aphrodite/>, where we will add updates at regular intervals.

Yours sincerely,

Simon Gollins

Ane Appelt

Co-Joint Chief Investigators  
APHRODITE Trial

Want to know more? Then please check out the twitter feed  
[https://twitter.com/aphrodite\\_trial](https://twitter.com/aphrodite_trial)

